

1:25-mj-00024-PAS

AFFIDAVIT OF VA OIG SPECIAL AGENT THOMAS DONNELLY

I, Special Agent Thomas Donnelly, depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a Special Agent with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Inspector General (VA OIG), where I have been employed since June 2021. Prior to joining VA OIG, I was employed as a Special Agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) for approximately six years. I am a graduate of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center's Criminal Investigator Training Program and the NCIS Special Agent Basic Training Program. Prior to NCIS, I served as a uniformed police officer for the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs.
2. I am currently assigned to the Manchester, New Hampshire Resident Agency of the VA OIG. My duties include, conducting investigations related to threats and numerous other violations of Title 18 of United States Code.
3. During my law enforcement career, I have participated in investigations involving threatening communications.
4. As described below, there is probable cause to believe that JOHN FANTEL (DOB: xx/xx/1982) committed a violation of federal law, specifically 18 U.S.C. § 875(c) (Interstate Communication of a Threat), hereinafter referred to as the SUBJECT OFFENSE.

5. I am also aware, based on my training and experience, that Title 18, United States Code, Section 875(c) makes it a federal offense for any person to transmit a threat communication in interstate commerce to injure any other person.
6. I submit this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint charging FANTEL with having communicated threats in interstate commerce to kill or harm employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Health Administration (VHA).
7. The statements contained in this affidavit are based on my participation in this investigation and conversations with other law enforcement officers involved in the investigation. This affidavit is submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause to believe that FANTEL violated the SUBJECT OFFENSE. It therefore does not set forth all the information that I and other law enforcement personnel have obtained during the course of the investigation.

FANTEL COMMUNICATES AN INTERSTATE THREAT VIA EMAIL

8. On April 11, 2025, an email from account "itssemail0000@gmail.com" was received by "VApdxrecruitment@va.gov." The receiving account was setup for the recruitment of nursing staff to work for the VA in the Portland, Oregon area. The email is copied here:

"From: First Name <itssemail0000@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, April 11, 2025 12:00 PM

To: VHAPOR VApdxrecruiter <VApdxrecruiter@va.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Veterans jobs

Hello,

I am entitled to money from the veterans affair.

You have one of your employees, [EE]

[https://cadre.sph.brown.edu/research/pilot-projects/\[EE\]-phd-christy-capone-phd](https://cadre.sph.brown.edu/research/pilot-projects/[EE]-phd-christy-capone-phd)

[https://vivo.brown.edu/docs/e/\[EE\]1_cv.pdf?dt=005808339](https://vivo.brown.edu/docs/e/[EE]1_cv.pdf?dt=005808339)

[https://openpayrolls.com/\[EE\]](https://openpayrolls.com/[EE])

Who has conspired with the government, brown University contacts, freemasonry and illuminati and of course, others such as the Italian mafia in rhode including Nicholas j testa, and joshua quinn, to assault, battery, kidnap and torture and and have my money and publicity stolen.

Now I promise to murder this animal loving dirty whore when I come back to rhode island, u can send all the military to protect her but I shall only murder the military members who protect anyone that targets me! I want this whore thrown out nakedness and homeless to the streets before I gun down all of you for your Donald Trump cover ups! Fuck america you terrorists shall die with a flag in

your mouth fuck the miltiqr6and fuck this country I won your Jewish banking system is ruined! Now fucking pay me my billions!

John fantel and you shall die from me!"

9. The email was read by "SS," a VA employed Registered Nurse assigned to the Portland, Oregon VAMC. On April 14, 2025, SS checked the aforementioned recruiting inbox, saw the April 11, 2025, email from itssemail0000@gmail.com, and reported it to the VA Police on April 14, 2025. As background, the VA Police Service (VAPS) is a uniformed federal law enforcement agency that provides law enforcement and security services to all VA facilities. VAPS Criminal Investigator Paul Carlson is assigned to the Portland, Oregon Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC). Investigator Carlson searched the VA-wide employee directory and determined the individual named "EE" in the email is a psychologist at the Providence, RI VAMC. On April 14, 2025, Carlson notified VAPS Criminal Investigator Peter Conley, who is assigned to the Providence VAMC. Carlson also notified the Oregon office of the VA OIG, who in turn notified my office.

10. The April 11, 2025 email from itssemail0000@gmail.com threatened an act of murder to obtain payment from the VA. The email was signed "John Fantel." The email was sent to an inbox maintained by the VA for use in Portland, Oregon. The email was read by "SS," a VA employed Registered Nurse assigned to the Portland, Oregon VAMC. The target of the threat, EE, is an employee of the VHA in Rhode Island.

FANTEL'S BACKGROUND WITH EE

11. On April 15, 2025, I interviewed EE with Investigator Conley to determine if she knew anyone with FANTEL's name as it was signed in the aforementioned threatening email. EE stated she attended a local high school in Rhode Island with FANTEL. EE had no contact with FANTEL following graduation until 2017.
12. Sometime in 2017 (EE could not remember the date), EE was at work in her capacity as a psychologist at the Providence VAMC. She left her office to greet her next patient in a waiting area. When she reached the waiting area, FANTEL approached her and asked her if she remembered him. EE confirmed she did remember him from high school. FANTEL asked EE if she had a few minutes. Believing FANTEL was a veteran, she invited him to her office and closed the door for privacy. FANTEL stated words to the effect of, "I just wanted to stop by and say hi. I heard you worked here." FANTEL revealed he was not a veteran. EE asked FANTEL to leave. He complied.
13. EE had no additional contact with FANTEL until she received an email she suspected to be from him at her Brown University email address on June 16, 2020. In addition to her work at the VA, EE holds a position with Brown University and was issued a "brown.edu" email account. The email was signed "John Fantel" and came from the address "absurd2020@email.com." The subject line of the email was "Hello Ghost." The body of the email stated, "Hey E, how's

life been? Great, give me a call if you still have a phone. 401-486-6251 John Fantel[.]”

14. On August 03, 2020, EE received a second email she believed to be from FANTEL. This time, the email was sent to her va.gov email account from “summ3r2020@mail.com.” The subject line was “Hello.” The email stated that the author believed unnamed people were manipulating EE into not speaking with him. The email was again signed “John Fantel[.]” The author also provided a Rhode Island area phone number, 401-302-5670; this number was different than the one in the June 16, 2020, email. EE reported the messages to the VA Police in Providence.

15. On August 13, 2020, EE received a third email she believed to be from FANTEL. This email came from “dfantel@hotmail.com” to EE’s va.gov account. In the message, the author alluded to losing access to his personal email accounts. EE informed investigators that FANTEL’s adoptive mother’s first name is “D[X]” and surmised that the email account could belong to D[X] Fantel. The subject line was “Trust no one.” The email stated in part, “If your [sic] in ny, you should leave like your life depends on it. But it’s your choice to think your life didnt [sic] end before we last saw each other at your office, how do you think we even were “allowed” to see each other, your [sic] a hostage and don’t realize it.” The author alleged that President Donald Trump was manipulating EE into not speaking with him. The email was signed “John Fantel[.]”

16. On August 31, 2020, EE received a fourth message believed to be initiated by FANTEL to her va.gov account from a system used by Maricopa County, AZ Jails to facilitate communication of inmates with outside contacts. The email stated an inmate named "Clifford Fintel" had sent a request to contact her. The message further invited EE to register for an account to begin emailing with the inmate. EE told me FANTEL often used "Clifford" as an alias first name in high school.

17. FANTEL's criminal history (obtained from the National Crime Information Center, or NCIC) indicates he has been charged with multiple crimes in Maricopa County, AZ, and has been incarcerated there. Additionally, "Clifford Fintel" is an officially recorded alias for FANTEL in NCIC. The use of this alias was further confirmed when querying a commercial lead database commonly available to law enforcement.

18. Following the spate of 2020 emails, EE had no additional contact with FANTEL until March 6, 2025. On that date, EE received an email from "itssemail0000@gmail.com" to both her va.gov and her brown.edu email accounts. The subject line was "Your response." In the message, the author asked EE why she was being "alienist" and not responding to him. The email also stated, "Don't think you'll have a chance at any of this if your [sic] counting on your own people. I really can't wait to finish this, you count on your federal contacts too much." The email was signed "John."

19. The March 6, 2025 email was sent to EE from the same account (itssemail0000@gmail.com) that sent VApdxrecruiter@va.gov an email signed "John Fantel" on April 11, 2025.

FANTEL'S HISTORY OF VIOLENCE AND THREATS

20. As outlined in Paragraph 17, I obtained FANTEL's criminal history from the NCIC. NCIC is a computerized database maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation containing, among other things, individuals' criminal histories. NCIC searches can be run by name, date of birth, Social Security number, and other criteria.

21. I requested a search of NCIC using FANTEL's Social Security number. The search revealed criminal charges in multiple jurisdictions including Rhode Island, Arizona, and Florida. These charges include, but are not limited to, aggravated assault on police officers, felony resisting arrest with force, aggravated assault and battery, assault on a person over the age of sixty with serious bodily injury, felony domestic assault, threatening/intimidating with property damage.

22. Throughout my investigation, I have been assisted by the US Secret Service (USSS). The USSS has investigated FANTEL on multiple occasions for threatening to kill or harm President Donald Trump, most recently in March 2025.

23. On March 06, 2025, FANTEL sent multiple emails to Orlando, FL area news outlets. The emails were reported to the USSS by the outlets. The emails came

from "itssemail0000@gmail.com" and were signed "John Fintel." The emails referenced killing President Trump. He indicated he was going to call in bomb threats to the White House and stated he was going to blackmail President Trump over perceived missile sales to Saudi Arabia.

24. On April 16, 2025, I spoke with the South Kingstown, RI Police Department (SKPD). SKPD advised they responded to the residence of FANTEL's parents, DF and CF, on April 14, 2025. DF and CF called SKPD after FANTEL threatened to kill them because they stopped sending him money. FANTEL texted DF, "I'll kill you for this, I want my money, I won't be homeless again because of you traitors." DF and CF reported sending approximately \$8,600 USD to FANTEL over the last few months. SKPD obtained an arrest warrant for FANTEL on April 15, 2025 for domestic violence, cyber harassment, and cyber stalking. DF and CF stated they believed FANTEL was most likely living in the Orlando, FL area, as that is where they had been sending money.

LINKING FANTEL TO ITSSEMAIL0000@GMAIL.COM

25. As previously discussed, FANTEL frequently "signs" emails he sends using his full name. Despite using different email addresses, such as those mentioned in Paragraphs 13 through 16, FANTEL frequently includes his full name. FANTEL also has a demonstrated history of emailing EE, and is clearly aware of her employment with VA.

26. The USSS investigation regarding the March 6, 2025 email threats against the President revealed the sender used “itssemail0000@gmail.com” to communicate to the news media. FANTEL identified himself by his full name across all three emails.

27. VA operates a robust email filter system that detects and logs emails sent from external email addresses to va.gov recipients. This log was queried for instances of “itssemail0000@gmail.com” emailing va.gov accounts. Two instances were observed. The first was the email mentioned in Paragraph 18 in which FANTEL emailed EE directly on March 06, 2025. The second instance occurred on April 11, 2025. This was the email discussed in Paragraph 9.

28. On April 17, 2025, Google provided subscriber information regarding the itssemail0000@gmail.com address. The account was created on December 24, 2024. While the creator of the account did not provide a name or enable two-factor authentication, a review of the login Internet Protocol (IP) addresses showed the account was most recently accessed using internet connections in the Orlando and Kissimmee, FL areas. There were also IP addresses associated to the Jacksonville, FL area. An IP address is a unique code that is assigned to a device when it interacts with the Internet. According to FANTEL’s parents, he was recently residing at a hotel in the Orlando area. As referenced in Paragraph 24, FANTEL’s parents called SKPD on April 14, 2025, to report FANTEL was threatening them. Per FANTEL’s father, FANTEL began calling him from 407-239-4005 starting on April 13, 2025. This phone number resolves to the

TownePlace Suites located at 8040 Palm Parkway, Orlando, FL. FANTEL's father also reported mailing a cashier's check to FANTEL at this same address on April 7, 2025.

29. Google did not have data for April 2025. However, a review of available data shows "itssemail0000@gmail.com" was accessed from a Samsung Android device on March 6, 2025. The IP address for this connection resolved to the Kissimmee, FL area. This is the same day an email was sent from that account to EE as discussed in Paragraph 18.

CONCLUSION

30. Based on these facts, I submit there is probable cause to believe FANTEL knowingly violated 18 U.S.C. § 875(c) by using interstate communications to threaten to injure others.

31. I declare the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Thomas Donnelly

THOMAS DONNELLY
SPECIAL AGENT, VA OIG

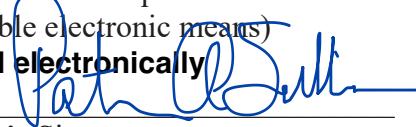
Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R.

Crim. P. 4.1. by: Telephone (specify reliable electronic means)

Sworn telephonically and signed electronically

April 21, 2025

Date



Judge's Signature

Providence, Rhode Island

City and State

Patricia A. Sullivan, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed Name and Title